



TEACHERS' RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Ages 13+ (years 7–10)

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English
- **General capabilities:** Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- To study voice and perspective, through the novel's use of six distinct first-person voices
- To explore gender politics relating to art and social media

THEMES

- Perception
- Identity
- Friendship
- Memory
- Neurodiversity
- Sexual diversity
- Grief
- Art
- Resilience
- Displacement
- Change

PREPARED BY

Emily Gale and Penguin Random House Australia

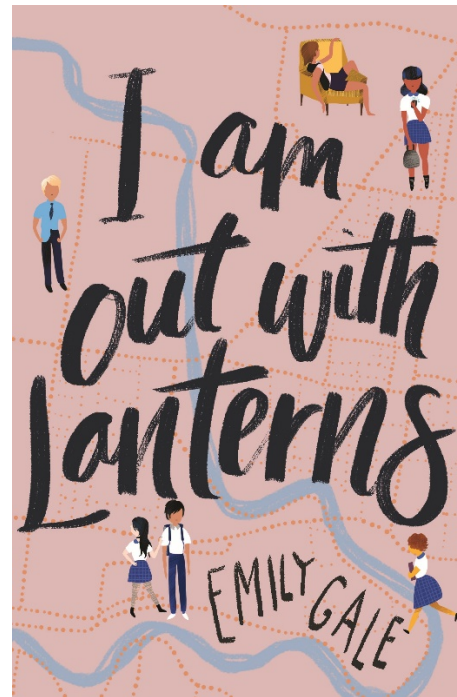
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I Am Out with Lanterns Emily Gale

PLOT SUMMARY

One of us is in the dark.

One of us is a bully.

One of us wants to be understood.

One of us loves a girl who loves another.

One of us remembers the past as if it just happened.

One of us believes they've drawn the future.

But we're all on the same map, looking for the same thing.

Year Ten begins with a jolt for best friends and neighbours Milo and Wren. Along with Hari, Juliet, Ben and Adie, they tell a story of friendship, family, wild crushes, bitter feuds and the power of a portrait.

As their lives intertwine, images could bring them together – and tear them apart.

'Glorious writing and brilliant characters you won't want to leave behind' Cath Crowley

'Nuanced, complex and thoroughly readable'
Books+Publishing

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Emily Gale has been involved in the children's book industry for twenty years: the first decade in London as an editor and freelance writer, and the latter in Melbourne as a reader for a literary agent and a children's book buyer. She spent several happy years at Melbourne's award-winning bookstore, Readings, during which time she was instrumental in establishing their Children's Book Prize.

Emily's writing includes *Eliza Bloom's Diary* (2014), a duology for younger readers which has been published in several languages, as well as four novels for teenagers: *Girl, Aloud* (2009), *Steal My Sunshine* (2013), *The Other Side of Summer* (2016) and its companion novel, *I Am Out with Lanterns* (2018).

AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

Emily says:

Although it's rare for me to read series fiction – even if I love the first book wholeheartedly – the exception to this are novels linked by setting and character, rather than storyline. Since moving to Australia ten years ago, I've fallen in love with the idea of 'linked' novels. Key examples include books by Fiona Wood (*Six Impossible Things, Wildlife, Cloudwish*), Jaclyn Moriarty (the Ashbury / Brookfield books), and Melina Marchetta (*Saving Francesca, The Piper's Son*). I've been waiting for the right opportunity to do this myself. It arrived when I finished writing *The Other Side of Summer*. I knew that I had so much more to say about Summer's sister, Wren, and their neighbour, Milo.

Wren and Milo are both artists in *The Other Side of Summer*; Wren does portraits, Milo prefers drawing maps. Wren is a goth, probably of the 'Romantic Goth' type, to be more specific. So I started to think about the gothic elements of novels I'd enjoyed as a teenager and immediately thought of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. I wanted to explore the idea of a portrait being so powerful as to influence feeling and behaviour.

In July 2016, various stories started to break about high-school students running Instagram and other social media accounts featuring photos of girls taken without permission. Some of the girls were still in primary school. The photos were rated and commented on. The language used to describe the girls was grotesque and humiliating. Several students were expelled as a result. The things I noted were this: that a parent had ruled out harsh punishment by using that old phrase 'Boys will be boys', and that some schools used this as an opportunity to tell girls that they were doing something wrong – the length of their skirts, the images they chose to post on social media, etc. It seemed to me that by diverting attention away

from what the boys had felt totally justified in doing, we were contributing to the toxic masculinity problem. I wrote a tweet during that time:

The problem isn't skirt length. The problem isn't lipstick. The problem isn't selfies. The problem isn't new. The problem isn't girls.

This is when the idea clicked into place of combining an examination of portraiture in classical art (particularly women as Muse to a male artist), and the modern phenomenon of taking selfies or 'stealing' images of people with our phones. I incorporated the exact wording of this tweet into the novel, with the realisation that the story was going to explore the theme of 'perception'. At this point, I understood that I would need more voices than Wren's and Milo's to tell this story, and began to develop several new characters.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. Discuss what the phrase 'toxic masculinity' means to you.
2. *I Am Out with Lanterns* is a standalone novel, but it is also a companion to *The Other Side of Summer*, and starts just after *The Other Side of Summer* finishes, but focuses on slightly older characters (Year Ten). Do you prefer to read standalone novels or are you into series fiction? Why?
3. If you could have any spin-off story from a novel you've enjoyed, what's the novel and which of its characters would get their own, independent story?

WRITING STYLE

Questions

1. The title of the novel is borrowed from a letter written by the poet Emily Dickinson to a friend describing what it was like to move house. Emily Dickinson was witty but found some aspects of life stressful (such as this). She wrote: 'I cannot tell you how we moved. I had rather not remember. I believe my "effects" were brought in a bandbox, and the "deathless me" on foot, not many moments after. I took at the time a memorandum of my several senses, and also of my hat and coat, and my best shoes – but it was lost in the melee, and **I am out with lanterns, looking for myself.**' What makes *I Am Out with Lanterns* a fitting title for this novel?
2. The author uses the name of the character and a single word at the beginning of each chapter. What function does this have?



Activities

1. Think of some other titles that would have suited the story. What are some of your favourite titles for novels? Why do they appeal to you?
2. The author leaves Ben’s story unresolved. We don’t know if he decides to go with his younger brother, Noah, or if he walks into the house to be with his dad. We are left unsure as to how much self-reflection or change Ben is capable of. Write Ben’s next chapter.
3. The plot unfolds in the form of online messages as well as face-to-face communication, for example, between Milo and his friend Dan, who lives interstate, or between Milo and Wren when they secretly message each other during dinner. Write a passage of online dialogue between any two characters.

For example, Adie telling her dad that she’s going to stay with Tracey, Jean and Juliet; Ben talking to Nate after he’s been expelled; Sophie talking to Summer about what it was like to see her image on Flare.

people (young girls in particular) criticised so heavily for posting selfies on Instagram? What would you say to counter this criticism?

- ‘The portrait, lying on my desk, has curled at either end like one of those fortune-teller fish we used to get in Christmas crackers – the transparent red ones that come with a list of fortunes. I remember that curling sides means “fickle”. But who’s fickle? Is it me?’ (p.268, *I Am Out with Lanterns*)

Perspective makes us look for meaning in ordinary events. For example, when Wren’s portrait of Adie curls, she extrapolates meaning by referring to a childhood memory of fortune-teller fish. What other ‘ordinary’ objects or events occur in the novel that could be said to have greater meaning in context?

- Objects that have particular meaning to one person can have a totally different meaning to another. For example, what happens to Milo’s handkerchief and how is this significant? What happens to the chair that Milo and Wren sit in on the street? What do you think happened to the portrait that Milo drew of Wren?

TEXTUAL CONCEPTS

Imagery and symbolism

- Consider the cover of the novel. What does it tell you about the narrative?
- Compare the reactions of Milo and the two dads to the snake incident in the story. What makes the snake a relevant symbol?
- How is the armchair that features on the cover used as a symbol?
- The portrait that Adie and Wren stumble upon in the op shop – and the ensuing ‘curse’ reported in the newspapers after the initial fire – is based on real events. Research ‘The Crying Boy’ paintings by Giovanni Bragolin and the mystery surrounding the origins of the alleged curse. What does this suggest to you about art, superstition and public hysteria?
- Milo ‘sees’ Wren’s face in a map he’s been drawing and his portrait of her is extrapolated from the map’s features. This idea is based on the work of the artist Ed Fairburn. Why do you think we like the idea of finding faces in things?
- The self-portrait that Cece shows Wren towards the end of the book is based on portraits by the Australian artist Lily Mae Martin. Look into the idea of the female nude self-portrait as an act of subversion and self-ownership. How does this compare to the modern-day ‘selfie’? Why are

Point of view

Questions

1. Why do you think the author chose to write several first-person points of view rather than using omniscient third person?
2. Why do you think the author reserved one short chapter for Milo’s younger sister, Sophie?

Activities

1. The challenge of writing a multiple-POV novel is in differentiating the voice of each narrator. Create two characters (or think of two real people). Write a paragraph from each of their points of view, introducing themselves to the reader. How will you distinguish between these two characters with vocabulary, tone and content?
2. Compare *I Am Out with Lanterns* to two recent Australian YA novels with multiple POVs that deal with similar themes: *Take Three Girls* (Cath Crowley, Simone Howell, Fiona Wood) and *Amelia Westlake* (Erin Gough). What similarities and differences do you note between these novels?

Intertextuality

The author references many books within the narrative, as well as poems and mythical beings.



Greek mythology

- The doorknocker on Adie's house is a brass head of the mythical character Medusa. What do you know about Medusa? Carry out some further research into why Medusa may be 'misunderstood'. How does this tie in with the novel?
- Wren refers to her mother as 'Charybdis', the whirlpool or sea monster. What's the significance of this reference in a coming-of-age story?

Emily Dickinson

Why do you think Juliet identifies with the poet Emily Dickinson?

- Wren tells Milo that although *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë used to be her favourite book, on a second read she found that she disliked it intensely. What can we extrapolate from this about the relationship between art (in any form) and audience?
- Ben and his classmates are studying the play *The Winslow Boy* by Terence Rattigan. Why is this text relevant to what happens to Ben?
- The class text for Milo and Wren is *The Man Who Loved Children* by Christina Stead, which is about a dysfunctional family headed by a deluded egoist father. How does Frank's ambition and ego affect Adie's day-to-day existence and identity?

THEMES

Objectification

1. As it pertains to bullying: Ben objectifies Milo (who he takes pleasure in bullying and otherwise gives very little thought to) and then his girlfriend, Poppy.
2. Frank objectifies his daughter, Adie, by using her as his Muse.
3. Wren becomes obsessed with Adie through her portrait of her, not by getting to know her.
4. Ben's group of friends take videos of girls without permission and upload them onto a public app.

Perception

1. Milo is aware of how people perceive him because he is autistic. He prefers to lie low and avoid trouble, but it is easier said than done. Milo is incensed when the perception of Adie becomes warped, even though she is a thorn in his side.
2. Wren believes she can tell things about Adie just by looking at the portrait of her.

Identity

1. *Sexual diversity*: Wren identifies as bisexual and her family is supportive. She is inexperienced, and still grieving the loss of her brother. During the course of the novel she becomes closer to Hari, who is queer but only 'out' to her closest friends because of the strict rules of her mother's church. Hari has been pretending to date Luca for years, until Luca (who is gay) decides to come out to his family. Hari's gay friend Matt is open about his sexuality.
2. *Neurodiversity*: Milo, his friend Dan, and classmate Tom, are autistic. Tom is non-communicative with his classmates for the majority of the novel, but plays a key role in Adie finding out something about her past. Dan is homeschooled and lives interstate. He and Milo have only met once in real life but are best friends and communicate daily online.

Friendship

In the novel, friends are reunited, friendships grow in some cases, start afresh or shift in others. Loyalty is tested (e.g. when Ben is asked who is responsible for the Flare account by the police and high school principal), and proved (e.g. when Milo defends Wren by devising a plan to spread a message to those who hurt her).

Memory

Juliet's memory is extremely rare in its detail and clarity, whereas Adie has trouble recalling her early life. Wren grapples with the memory of her brother. Milo prefers not to remember his primary school years. Hari recalls a time when Christian, now a high school bully, was a good friend. Juliet provides memories to her classmates that they have forgotten.

Grief

Wren's family cope with the shadow of her brother's death, which occurred just before the start of *The Other Side of Summer*, a few years before *I Am Out with Lanterns* begins.

Art

Wren's mother is a working artist who mainly sells her art from a market stall; Wren is also a talented artist.

Frank Ryan, Adie's father, has been a penniless artist for years but has just been shortlisted for a portrait award.

Milo has a talent for drawing complex maps, which he also finds therapeutic. His little sister asks him to draw her a portrait that she can pass off as her own to gain favour with the frosty art teacher and credit with her group of friends, who she feels isolated from.



Resilience

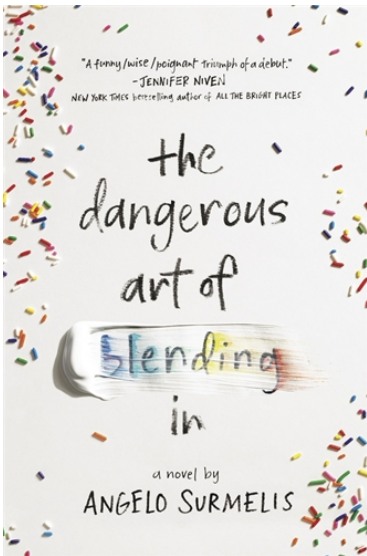
1. Milo is autistic. He was bullied and isolated throughout primary school and hates thinking back to that time. High school is challenging but made slightly easier by a few allies, particularly Wren. However, he is regularly targeted by family 'friend' Ben.
2. Wren discusses how she has been coping with the loss of her brother – by drawing portraits of him, even ageing them as he might have aged. A confrontation with her mother makes her think that this way of coping isn't as healthy as she thinks.

Displacement

1. Adie has been moved around constantly by the whims of her father. Frank has had a constant stream of girlfriends (Adie calls them not-mothers). She longs for permanence, a school environment, friends, and a return to a happiness she used to feel in the house they return to at the start of the novel.
2. Wren still feels fairly new in Australia. The family moved to Melbourne a couple of years ago from London.



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



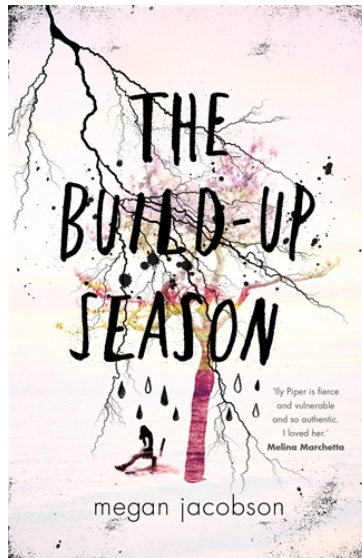
The Dangerous Art of Blending In
by Angelo Surlmelis

Seventeen-year-old Evan doesn't know where he fits in. He loves his family, but is terrorised by his abusive mother and confused by his father's silence. He has friends, but one of them – Henry – has become distractingly attractive, and seems interested being more than just a friend.

Oh, and yes, Evan kissed a boy this summer.

As things with Henry heat up and the violence escalates, Evan has to decide how to find his voice in a world where he has always survived by being silent.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



The Build-Up Season
by Megan Jacobson

He's back.

The monster.

It's the middle of the night and I'm awake, because even though I'm seventeen I still haven't outgrown the childhood monster that haunts you in the dark. I haven't outgrown it, because when I was a child, the monster was real.

He was my father.

Seventeen-year-old Iliad Piper is named after war and angry at the world. Growing up with a violent father and abused mother, she doesn't know how to do relationships, family or friends. Ily takes off her armour for nobody, until she meets Jared, someone who's as complicated as she is.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



The Other Side of Summer
by Emily Gale

Summer is trying to recover from a tragedy, but it seems impossible when her family is falling apart around her. Having an extraordinary best friend like Mal helps a little, but Summer's secret source of happiness is a link to the past: one very special guitar.

Now her dad's plan to save them is turning Summer's life upside down again. The next thing she knows, they've moved to the other side of the world.

In Australia, Summer makes an unlikely friend, who seems to be magically connected to her guitar. Is this for real? Has a mysterious boy been sent to help Summer? Or could it be the other way around?

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	RRP	QTY	TOTAL
I Am Out with Lanterns	Emily Gale	9780143782766	\$17.99		
The Other Side of Summer	Emily Gale	9780143780113	\$16.99		
The Dangerous Art of Blending In	Angelo Surmelis	9780143790150	\$19.99		
The Build-Up Season	Megan Jacobson	9780143573388	\$19.99		
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